The Psychology of the "Nut," page 1775.

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"AND WHEN SHE GOT THERE
THE CUPBOARD WAS BARE—."

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

New Roumanian Monarch's Curious Dilemma: A Hohenzollern at the Head of an Anti-Hohenzollern People.

Thrones are rocking in Europe to-day as they haven't rocked since '48. And one of the most rickety of them all is, curiously enough, the one which has been best filled. That is the Throne of Roumania. For over forty years Prince Charles of Hohenzollern kept his place and preserved his self-respect through the most terrific succession of dynastic and anti-dynastic plots and machinations, and brought his country to a pitch of perfection and a military glory which the Roumanians of forty years ago never dreamt possible. But to-day Germany is as severely execrated in Roumania as elsewhere, and with Russia marching to certain triumph across her flanks, and Austria hated even worse than Germany, the new Roumanian king is certain to have a very rotten time of it.

* * *

A Mistake King Charles Never Made.

It is King Ferdinand's misfortune that he is a Hohenzollern, but he belongs to the ancient senior and Catholic branch, which has for five centuries been completely overshadowed by the Berlin Hohenzollerns, but which is, nevertheless, the ablest section of the Brandenburg family. His Majesty's deceased uncle, King Charles, led his troops to victory on the battlefield of Plevna, and though it would have been a terrific strain to yield to his people's demand, and go into the field against the Berlin Bounder, yet King Charles would have done it, for never in his long reign did he make the mistake of forgetting that a monarch is the servant of the people he governs. As the new Queen of Roumania is an English Princess, daughter of King Edward's brother, the Duke of Edinburgh, it will be interesting to note the effect of her influence upon the war in Eastern Europe.

* * *

No Bunkum about Kitchener.

There is nothing maudlin about Lord Kitchener's handling of his country's greatest problem. His reply to the Germans in Antwerp was short and sharp! Thousands of troops were shipped off last Monday night to Belgium from Harwich and elsewhere. None of the men knew where they were going till they found themselves on board the transports. I met a crowd of the Warwickshires in a train at Moorgate Street. They had been marched out for a day's tramp in full war paint that morning, and their march did not end, to their amazement, till they sat down in a District train *en route* for Liverpool Street and the Continent. They were all a bit "down in the mouth," for all their mothers and sweethearts were left that night wondering what had become of them. But it's all in the day's work, and there is no room for kid gloves in Kitchener's plan! Thank God, Britain has got a man at last at the War Office!

* * *

A Dead Cecil and his Relations.

The war has brought sorrow into many homes during the past two months, but in none is it more poignant than at Didlington Hall, Norfolk, where poor young Lieutenant Cecil will never be seen again. He was heir to the Barony of Amherst of Hackney, and his death is but one more hideous blow for a highly-respected family which has had nothing but misfortune and death for years past. His grandfather, the first Lord Amherst of Hackney, died of a broken heart, owing to the rascality of a solicitor who robbed him of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and brought his Lordship to ruin. It is one of the most pathetic stories of this century. For fifty years William Tyssen-Amherst, as he was before being ennobled, had played a conspicuous part as a representative country gentleman in East Anglia. By his wife, a very rich heiress, he had six daughters, the oldest of whom married the Marquess of Exeter's uncle, Lord William Cecil, and became the mother of the gallant young officer whose death at the front is now so seriously mourned.

* * *

The Blow that Killed Lord Amherst.

Lord Amherst of Hackney was a rich man, with a large ground rental in London, chiefly at Hackney, and he was, too, a clever, studious man, whose life was spent in enriching his baronial mansion with wonderful art treasures from Egypt and Assyria. He was a popular host, and kings and emperors were glad of his hospitality—among them the late King Carlos of Portugal and our King George. Lord Amherst, wrapped up in his archaic studies, left the entire management of his affairs to a solicitor named George Cheston, who was always regarded as "above suspicion." A director of many companies, he actually sat in judgment upon defaulting lawyers as a member of the Council of the Incorporated Law Society. At the very moment that Lord Amherst's good neighbours in Norfolk were preparing to celebrate his Lordship's wedded jubilee, the terrible blow that killed him came.

* * *

"Amherst is Selling his Heart's Blood!"

George Cheston died suddenly, and his will made it plain that he had "blown" the whole of Lord Amherst's fortune! There was nothing left at all. To evade detection during his lifetime he had produced dividends on stocks which he had already made away with; he had paid rent on properties that he had in his trustee's name heavily mortgaged. On behalf of the parties for whom Lord Amherst had been acting since 1874, claims were advanced for the refundment of the stolen property. Litigation dragged on for two years, and resulted in judgment against his Lordship. Then Lord Amherst had to sell his priceless collection, and there was not a single piece that stood before the auctioneer's rostrum, not one print, not one tiny silver vase, that was not dear to the poor old man.

A solicitor wrote at the time, "Amherst's sale is a real tragedy. He is selling his very heart's blood!" But it all had to go. Collectors came from all parts of the world, and the huge prices that were achieved for Lord Amherst's Gobelin tapestries, his wonderful Sèvres china, his scarabs, and the thousand and one objects of art, set the seal upon the faultless taste which he had displayed in making his collections.

* * *

The Amhersts' Connection with the Cecils.

When the late King Carlos was at Didlington, Lord Amherst was already "a ruined man," yet he had no suspicion of it at all. His man, Cheston, was regarded by him as one of the "pillars of the Law!" The passing of his collections finally did for Lord Amherst, and he

She: "I suppose you agree that everything is fair in love and war?"
He: "I don't know. I've been in love several times, but I never was married."

...oon died, aged only 73. He might have ...ived another twenty years. He had to ...eave Didlington Hall, and let it, and ...ave all he could. Two of his daughters ...ad married Cecils—one, the eldest, a ...member of the Exeter Cecils, and another a member of the Hatfield family, the well-known Mr. Evelyn Cecil, M.P. Lady William Cecil lived at her father's Yorkshire mansion of Hunmanby Hall, and she is her father's successor in the Amherst barony, which was created in 1892, the unfortunate young Lieutenant Cecil being her eldest son.

* * *

Cecils not a Military Family.

It is a curious fact that all the titles created for the Cecils during the last three hundred years, except the Exeter and Salisbury marquessates, have become extinct. One of them was the Barony of Wimbledon, which was conferred upon a notoriously incompetent general of the Salisbury family, who lost every battle into which he led his troops. The Salisbury Cecils, of course, are not a military family, although Lord Salisbury's brother, Lord Edward Cecil, has done some good work in Egypt, and has been one of Kitchener's right-hand men for two decades and more.

* * *

When Lord Kitchener Turned Pale.

Mention of Lord Edward Cecil reminds me of a remarkably interesting story I heard in the Sports Club the other night of a tragic moment when Lord Edward and the then Sir Herbert Kitchener turned pale with distress, and had to take a whisky and soda to buck them up. My informant was present at the incident, and he said that at the moment referred to his knees almost knocked with suppressed emotion. It was when Lord Edward Cecil left the Egyptian Flotilla at Fashoda and went ashore to request an audience for Sir Herbert Kitchener with Colonel Marchand. The fate of two great empires hung upon that meeting. Colonel Marchand acquiesced, and Kitchener came ashore. Here is what took place, as it was told to me. Kitchener first explained to the Frenchman that he was not an English general, but the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, and he desired to plant the flag of the Khedive and the Sublime Porte over the Fort of Fashoda.

* * *

An Historic Meeting.

Then said the Sirdar, "What are your intentions, Major?"

"I am awaiting instructions from my Government, General!"

"You will not retire, after the magnificent exploration you have made?"

"No, no, General; I am awaiting orders!"

"Major, I will place my boats at your disposal to regain Europe by way of the Nile!"

"General, I thank you, but I cannot accept; I am awaiting orders from my Government!"

"Many things have happened since you have been away!"

"General, whatever has happened, France, who never abandons her officers, will send me orders!"

"Major, I must plant at Fashoda the flag of his Highness the Khedive!"

"General, I am ready to hoist it myself on the village!"

"On the fort, Major!"

"I cannot permit it, General, since the French flag is there!"

"And if my instructions directed me to hoist on the fort the flag of the Khedive?"

"I should be obliged to oppose it, General!"

* * *

"Our Official Interview is Terminated Now!"

Then, said my informant, Kitchener suddenly grew pale, and his hand trembled. Turning round, he pointed to his flotilla, and the 2,000 men pressed close to one another, awaiting events. Turning again to Major Marchand, Kitchener said, "Major, supremacy——" (and further words failed him).

Marchand replied, "General, military supremacy can only be determined by combat!"

"You are right, Major . . . . but I must hoist the Khedive's flag on the fort, though you do not consent!"

"It is impossible, General . . . . place it on the village!"

"I think, Major, that our official interview is terminated now."

"As you please, General!"

Then it was that Kitchener relieved the strain of this terrible moment. He said, with an effort at a smile, "Let us have a whisky and soda!" And together he and Marchand drank each other's healths, though they knew that two empires were practically at war. As

everybody knows, Major Marchand was not supported in his attitude by the French Government, though the Major never believed it possible that his Government would let him down after all the hundreds of miles he had come through pestilence and rapine in order to plant the French flag at Fashoda!

* * *

Romance of Sir Valentine Grace.

Time is bringing strange revenges to many of our noble ones in 1914, even without the assistance of the war. Seven hundred years ago—to be precise, in 1176—Ireland had a Viceroy from England named Raymond Fitzwalter, who laid up heirs to his winnings, and through a line of worthy baronets they have come down in this century to Sir Valentine Grace, who has been High Sheriff of his own Queen's County, has worn the uniform of the Leinster Militia, is a Deputy-Lieutenant in Ireland, and married Major John Jameson's daughter, but who to-day is playing the part—and playing it uncommonly well—of Timothy Doyle, the rapscallion hotel proprietor of Ballymoy, in "General John Regan," at the Coronet Theatre at Notting Hill. "General John Regan" is the play in which the Irish Viceroy of our time is so delightfully guyed.

Sir Valentine has the East of Ireland accent "to the life," and he is probably "in the bill" at the Coronet for fun more than necessity. He is still on the right side of forty, and his mother lives at the family place near Dublin. Sir Valentine can boast strains of blood of most of the ancient kings of Ireland, and his father, the late Sir Percy Grace, was an Irish Educational Commissioner. Sir Valentine gets his name from his mother, who was Valentine O'Brien O'Connor's daughter, and he has a ten-year-old son to follow him in the family title.

* * *

From Distillers' Chairman to the Footlights.

With the Leinster Regiment doing such excellent work at the front, Sir Valentine might exchange his stage corduroys for khaki with credit, and follow in the footsteps of his uncle, Colonel Hamilton Grace, the next heir after his little son, who went through the Crimean, Sardinian, Turkish, and New Zealand campaigns, and was well-known at Tunbridge Wells. Sir Valentine on the stage adds some new experiences to an autobiography which includes the Membership for West Clare and the Chairmanship of the Dublin Distillers' Company!

* * *

"Damned Extraordinary!"

In these days, when commissions in his Majesty's Army have to be thrown about in their thousands to gallant and full-blooded lads with plenty of pluck but no military training at all, it is almost humorous to reflect on the trouble a commission or an appointment in the army can make in times of peace. I am reminded of this fact by dear old Sir Evelyn Wood's funny stories in the papers the other day, the gallant Field-Marshal being a survival of the supposedly dead-and-gone days when kissing went by favour in the Junior Service. For the last case of military "kissing" I ever personally heard of was no other than the appointment of this same grand old officer's son to the Royal Dragoons. When I last met him, Major Wood—not the one who is

"'Ere, Maria, haven't you something else to get?"
"Yes, I believe I have. How did you know, though?"
"Well, you see, I've one and sixpence left."

The Difficulties of Recruiting in Piccadilly.

so well-known at the Coliseum, by the way—was in the Devonshire Regiment, and I was one day astonished to hear that he had been promoted to a commission in the Royal Engineers, and had thus jumped clean over the heads of some hundreds of cavalry officers, leaving an impression in the Service which was summed up in the words of General Sir "Bill" Gatacre, who told me of it, as "Damned Extraordinary!"

* * *

Why General de Lisle was Promoted from the Line.

General Bill Gatacre, of course, said nothing about how it happened that the selection board thus popped the famous Field-Marshal's son into his cavalry billet, although such an appointment was unprecedented, the only similar case being the promotion of Major de Lisle, now the dashing leader of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade at the front—who went up from the Durham Light Infantry to a cavalry command because of proved fitness in war. The promotion of Major de Lisle was taken as being quite all right, and on account of sheer merit.

* * *

"Lucky Dog!"

Since then I have heard nothing of Major Wood, but I have heard a lot about General Henry de Beauvoir de Lisle, who, like Sir John French, is an Irishman, who showed rare mettle in command of his division of mounted infantry at Giniss, where he got the Distinguished Service Order, as well as the medal and star. He was right in it, too, at Ambigol Wells, during the attack on the fort by the Arabs. General de Lisle is a great polo-player, was captain of his regimental team for ten years, and his "Hints to Polo-Players in India" has saved many mistakes on the part of freshers in that horrid country. General de Lisle is fortunate enough to have the eye of Queen Mary closely upon himself and his brigade in this war, so he is sure to be heard of in the days to come. Lucky dog!

* * *

Nothing Doing for the French Pretender!

There is one disappointed man over the war! Who do you think he is? No other than the Duc d'Orleans, the would-be King Louis of France! His Royal Highness loyally offered his services to President Poincaré as a private in the French Army, but Monsieur le President "wasn't having any!" There is not the slightest disposition on the part of France to allow the Duc to get an atom of military kudos out of this war! The French are quite content under the Republic, thank you, and the horrors of the present shock have not improved one jot the chances of the *coup d'état* that the Duc has waited fifty years for. So his Royal Highness has returned to England, and where do you suppose I met him? At the Savoy on Saturday evening, and dining as the guest of—again, whom do you think? No other than Aga Khan the Mahomet of the Shiah Mohammedans! Of all the curiously assorted pairs on earth they are surely the most curious! But two of the most interesting personalities, for all that!

* * *

Clapped into the Conciergerie.

France, however, is a trifle harsh with its Pretender to the Bourbon Throne! I mind me of another occasion when the Duc was just as keen on doing his duty to his country as now, and very unpleasantly they treated him. Not the French people, that is! The Duc largely had "the people" with him, and his action was the smartest thing he has done so far towards winning their dynastic sympathies! He suddenly appeared on French soil, which the Republic has forbidden him ever to tread, and asked to be allowed to serve as a conscript in the French Army. By way of answer to his request, he was clapped into the grim prison where Marie Antoinette spent her last moments—the Conciergerie—where they made his Royal Highness sleep on a plank bed far too short for a man who stands six feet two inches. Rather than ask for a new bed, the Duc slept on the floor, but he refused to complain until he got his release. His only consolation just now is that if the Frenchies won't have him, they won't have his Napoleonic rival, Prince Bonaparte, either! So the two are quits—for the present!

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Whether Lord Haldane's speech was not the best possible answer to those who say he was aggrieved at being turned out of the War Office in favour of Lord Kitchener?

* * *

Whether General Baden-Powell has not well deserved the gratitude of his country for bringing the services of Boy Scouts to the assistance of the poor Belgian refugees?

* * *

Whether King Manoel will be allowed to serve with the Portuguese forces at the war?

* * *

And how long it will be before Spain butts in?

* * *

If some of our great Radical ladies, especially the wife of Lord Emmott, are not doing real heroines' work in the Aldwych "barracks," on behalf of the destitute Belgians?

* * *

Whether the Prince of Wales is not, after all, to be sent to Belgium with the next detachment of Grenadier Guards which goes to the front?

* * *

Is it not time that the literary hacks — Shaw, Arnold Bennett, Blatchford, Thomas Hardy, and the rest — were locked up to save any more armchair criticisms of our generals, admirals and war-administrators?

* * *

The identity of the young officer at the Headley Camp, Epsom, who has been visited by thirteen different "sisters" —all remarkably pretty girls, and all about the same age—during the past month?

* * *

If Miss Mabel Russell has been engaging in a brisk "spar" with the management of the Empire over the question of her salary, and if matters are amicably settled yet?

* * *

If the famous Madame de Thèbes is once more busy with her prophecies, and if she has predicted, among a host of other things, that the Kaiser will enter Paris as a prisoner of war early next year?

* * *

Who was responsible for circulating the absurd story that Gustav Hamel is not dead after all, but serving with the German Army Flying Corps?

* * *

If a certain publisher did not on one occasion offer a very considerable sum of money for the privilege of publishing the diary of the late Mme. Bricka—formerly the governess of Queen Mary—and why it was that she preferred to have it destroyed?

If our suggestion of May last, that there should be a national memorial to England's lost airmen, is not still more apropos since the war?

* * *

If there is not a good deal of disease among army horses in the home departments?

* * *

Why the worst of our Sunday papers is still permitted to disseminate war lies?

* * *

Is it not quite time, in the interests of the girls themselves, that the police took some action in regard to the street sale of French newspapers by young, pretty and well-dressed girls?

* * *

How the Kaiser relished the message sent from Berlin, Ontario, to Earl Kitchener?

* * *

Why did the authorities hush up the "live shell" incident at the Empress Eugénie's residence, and wasn't it a rummy kind of a practical joke?

* * *

If John Burns has not shown a certain amount of wisdom in not appearing on a platform since his resignation, and what his constituents think of him?

* * *

If A. E. W. Mason has dramatised his splendid novel, "Running Water," and who will be the fortunate producer?

* * *

If the Gaekwar of Baroda, during his stay in London, has not been "coming down handsome" for the various war and relief funds?

* * *

If Lord Charles Beresford has not exercised a commendable self-restraint in his newly-published book of reminiscences, and are they half as vitriolic as many people prophesied they would be?

* * *

Whether the Belgian lady's outspoken letter to the Kaiserin *re* Iron Crosses ever reached the august lady for whom it was intended?

* * *

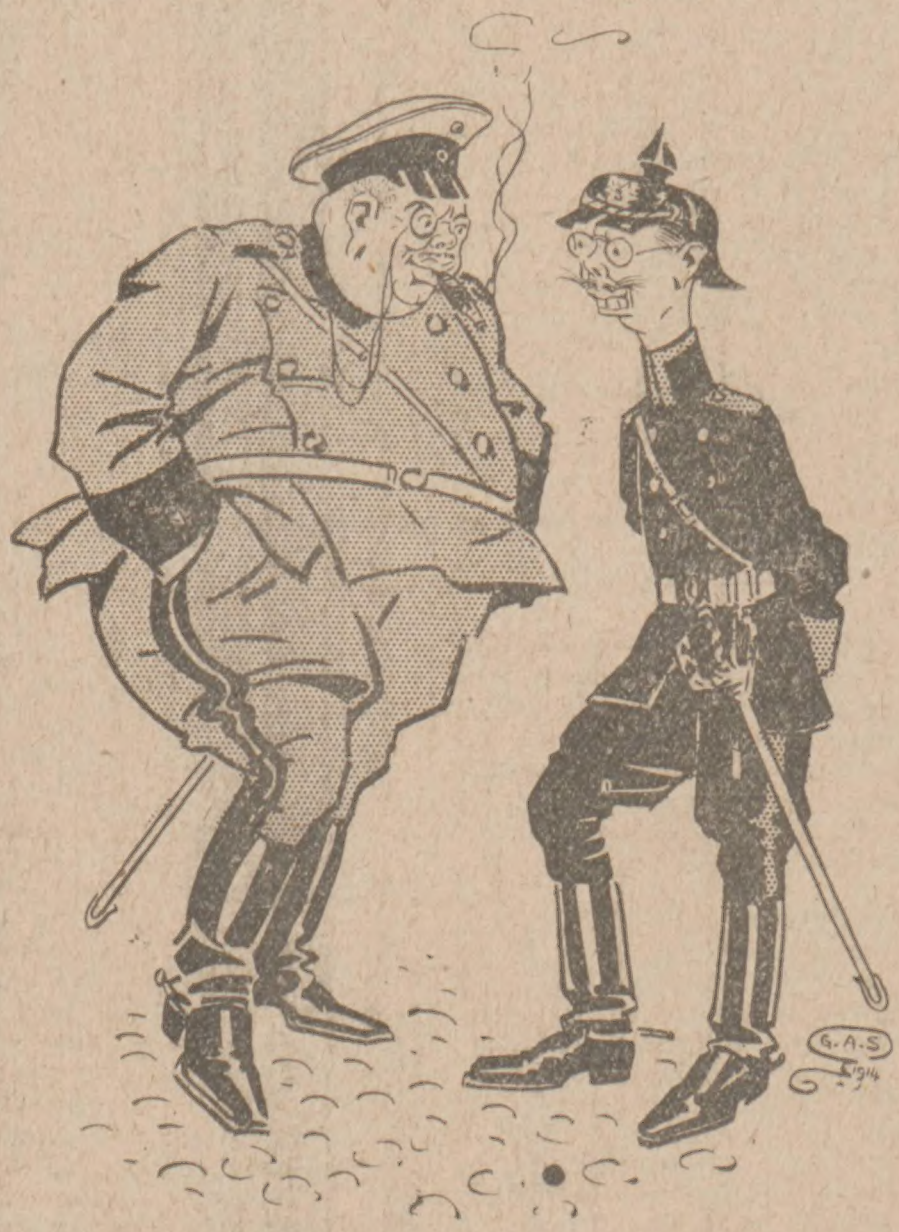
Whether the great Cochrane himself ever did a much finer thing than the double exploit of submarine [illegible]

* * *

If the Duke of Buccleuch intends to follow the example of a certain other Duke, and act as his own auctioneer on the occasion of the sale of Montagu House?

* * *

How much time the Duchess of Westminster spent upon having the numerous artistic photographs taken of her in her becoming nurse's garb, and in distributing the same among the leading newspapers and journals in the country before leaving for the front?



Fritz: "Ridiculous, isn't it, what a fuss the French women are making of the English swine?"
Hans: "It will be different when we get to Paris. Then they will see what a man should be like."

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE "NUT."

The "nut" in times of peace has always had a large amount of attention bestowed upon him, although, perhaps, not more than his majestic nuttiness deserves. But I do not think that in times of war he gets his due, and as even the devil is entitled to that, let alone such an important personage as the "nut," I should like to give him part of his due in the columns of a paper that believes, above all things, in justice to all classes of society, and would not for worlds entertain the possibility of the "nut" disappearing entirely from the public view.

Yet, when you come to think of it, the "nut" has already, to a great extent, disappeared from the public view. Before the war he was everywhere, the observed of all observers, the joy of the outfitters, the delight of the girls, the amusement and entertainment of everybody. He was sometimes ridiculed, but he was always envied. For he had the things that all women, and most men, envy—youth and beauty and gallantry and cheek, and not too many brains wherewith to upset the intellectual applecarts of his friends and enemies. Indeed, perhaps the real reason why the "nut" is, taken as a whole, a popular personage, is that he is always careful to recognise his limitations in the matter of brains, in which respect he differs very much from the generality of mankind. By which means he keeps on the right side of both his enemies and his friends. The former he highly amuses by the cool and confident presumption that they are not worth the attention of his masterly mind. The latter he pleases by the still more confident assumption that neither they nor he need make any pretensions to intellectual qualities at all, and can therefore, without disappointing one another, "take them as read."

* * *

But as a matter of fact, although the "nut" is often popularly supposed to be a pretentious personage, it is his very lack of pretence that makes people like him. True, he pretends to perfection in the little things of life, but he never pretends to be an archbishop or a Prime Minister. He leaves that to the people who take life seriously, and by laughing at them he scores off them much more effectually than they do by laughing at him.

* * *

So now that we are at war the "nut" has disappeared—at any rate from our active life. You can still see him, true, in the streets of London if you carefully look for him. You can find him at the theatres and the music-halls, if you adjust your eyeglass with care. He is occasionally seen in the purlieus of that particular type of society which he is so fond of frequenting. He has by no means been wiped off the face of London, let alone of the earth. But for many practical purposes he has gone. Even when you do meet him his pristine vigour seems to have departed from him. He is not the "nut" as we used to know him. A good part of his glory has departed from him. There must certainly be something radically wrong with the universe when even the comic papers are devoted to other things than the "nut."

* * *

And there is something radically wrong with the universe. There are two things radically wrong with it. One of them is the insanity of the German Emperor, and the other is the ignorance of the very large number of people who refuse to appreciate the sanity and extreme usefulness of the "nut." For I shall maintain that, in time of war, the genus "nut" is a very important and useful genus indeed, and deserving of our warmest admiration. For where is the "nut" at the present time? He has gone to war, or he is getting himself ready to go to war. In a word, the "nut," when you come to examine his psychology, is one of the most useful members of society at such a time as the present, when the stuff that is in a man comes out with a vengeance if he has any to come out at all.

* * *

It is a very great mistake to suppose that the qualities that go to make a "nut" are trivial qualities. They are very important qualities, when you analyse them, and they go to make an excellent soldier. I have seen something of war, and I make bold to say that it is the "nutty" qualities in the Englishman that have won many of our battles for us. Remember, in the first place, that things are not what they seem, either as regards "nuts" or anything else. We have Shakespeare's authority for this truism, and if we hadn't, a survey of life would show us its invulnerable truth. The officers of the British Army have always been, and are to-day, crammed full of "nutty" qualities.

* * *

What are the qualities of the "nut" He is a dressy man, and he recognises the importance of dress in human psychology. In this respect he is far deeper in mind, although he may perhaps not know it, than those who ridicule him. For dress means style in character as well as in appearance, and style in character means coolness in character, and coolness in character means bravery in character, and bravery in character means victory in battle. Lord Roberts was always a dressy and a natty officer, and I would almost go so far as to say, strange though it may seem, that while a private soldier can fight splendidly and coolly in any sort of old clothes if he has to do it, an officer can never be absolutely at his best as an officer unless his costume and appearance enable him to live up to the psychology which long years of breeding and training have put within him.

* * *

Colonel Legge, of the 11th Hussars, was only one of hundreds of instances of this truth during the South African War. He was in command of a regiment of irregulars during that campaign. He was one of the most successful of all commanders of irregular corps. He was the most immaculately dressed officer in the British Army. He wore his eyeglass in face of the hottest fire, and he died with a bullet through it. His servants were compelled, at any cost, to obtain for him eggs from the Boer farms, whenever it was humanly possible to do it, so that with the whites of the eggs they could polish his leggings till you could literally see your face in them. His boots and his clothes were always the perfection of loveliness. He was, in a word, a "nut," as Lord Roberts and three-quarters of our officers are "nuts" in the matter of dress. And partly by so being he stood out coolly and gloriously in front of one of the most raggedly-dressed corps of irregulars on the South African veldt, and led them to victory many a time and oft. Why? Because, psychologically, his dress brought out the realities of his style and character and courage as a British officer. He simply couldn't have fought—at any rate as a leader—in old clothes. He had to be dressed for the part, and it is because the "nuts" have, owing to their natures, to be always dressed for their parts that they are so frequently underrated, when, as a matter of truth, they are, in a large number of cases, among the bravest of the brave.

* * *

Secondly, the "nut" is usually a man who loves the girls and gives a good deal of time and attention to the exquisite exquisiteness of the female sex. In this respect, again, he is closely allied to the British officer. Indeed, it may be said that almost every British officer is a "nut" in this regard, and, therefore, every "nut" has within him another of the qualities that go to make the British officer. Devotion to the ladies means chivalry, and chivalry is hardly possible without bravery. And so here again the "nut" is worthy of our serious

attention in time of war, however we may ridicule him in times of peace. You cannot possibly imagine a "nut" being guilty of the German atrocities, for instance. They would be absolutely revolting to his "nutty" soul, and herein has he a right to our pride and recognition. And this "nutty" quality of devotion to the girls is seen in the majority of our best officers. I don't think, true, that Lord Kitchener has overmuch of it, although those who know more of Kitchener than is seen in the papers could tell you tales of the Secretary of War and the fair sex that might make you revise your estimate of the hard, stern man now ruling the country. But at any rate, the "nuts" can truly claim that Sir John French, Sir Douglas Haig, and the late "Tommy" Grierson used to be, in times of peace, the most gallant of the gallant where the ladies were concerned; and thus our three leading generals at the commencement of the war were, in a most important aspect of "nuttiness," clearly on the side of the "nuts," who have in the past been so unfairly depreciated. But it is not necessary to labour this point. The "nut" loves the girls. The British officer loves the girls. Therefore is the "nut" worthy of our admiration and esteem. Therefore has he within him one more of the qualities that, psychologically applied on the battlefield, make him a soldier and a man.

Thirdly, the "nut" goes through life and does what is in front of him with a lightness—a frivolity if you will—that makes him, in time of war, just the man for a soldier. He is serious enough right down at the bottom of him. But he can take everything, even the worst of tragedies, with an apparent lightness that is of infinite use on the battlefield. It is his very lack of intellect and philosophical thought that prevents him from seeing in all its horror the tragedy of war while it is actually going on. That is partly why he is such a good soldier. That is partly why the British officer is such a good soldier. He takes everything, even the worst, with an apparent lightness that is really not lightness at all. Thus he keeps his nerve. Thus he keeps his head. Thus he does brave deeds that do not seem brave to him at the time, and that would be quite impossible to a learned and ill-dressed philosopher, who would be too busy analysing the deep things of human nature and human tragedy to do his full duty in the bloody business of war.

The "nut," in a sentence, illustrates at a time such as the present one of the most useful traits of the typical Englishman. While retaining all his natural qualities he can turn them and apply them in the very direction required for the achievement of his country's ends. He does not cease to be a "nut." He becomes, in fact, more difficult to crack than ever, as the Germans are discovering to their infinite chagrin.

Jonathan Grub Strete.

The Iron Cross is doubtless made of pig-iron.

* * *

The Kaiser is obviously unfit to govern. A ruler should be straight.

* * *

The war on German trade must be war to the knife. The Sheffield cutlers are showing much keenness in this direction.

* * *

The Kaiser's war plans are said to show a deplorable want of common-sense. But then the only kind of sense with which he is familiar is incense.

* * *

The suggestion that prisoners of war in this country should be put on afforestation work seems a happy thought, as it will doubtless be some time before they are out of the wood.

TABLOID TOPICS.

Over 10,000 applicants replied to an advertisement in Berlin for 15 needlewomen. The seamy side of the war.

* * *

The Kaiser has exhorted his people to practise "patience." Meanwhile he himself is playing a game of "bluff."

* * *

Suggestion for a German band: Press Agency, the lyre; Crown Prince, the lute; Kaiser, "God's instrument."

* * *

The Germans who touched the electrified barbed wire entanglements at Antwerp discovered that war is a shocking business.

* * *

It was a sweet idea of the Ontario Government to exhibit at their agency in the Strand a bust of King George in maple sugar.

* * *

The Japanese are offering us paper clothes for our soldiers; but we don't want a paper army, although we *are* fighting over a scrap of paper.

* * *

There is likely to be a scarcity of gloves due to stoppage of Continental supplies. The mailed fist seems to be all the rage just now, however.

* * *

A report from Bruges states that the Germans have opened all the prisons and let out all the thieves. "A fellow-feeling makes one wondrous kind."

* * *

When will the war end? We don't know, but now that the great Mr. Blatchford has gone to France, we are in hopes of a definite date being fixed.

* * *

We strongly suspect a German spy, bent on discouraging recruiting, of originating the idea that everybody should smile on the lads of Kitchener's Army.

* * *

The titles of two new plays, "The Sphinx" and "The Double Mystery," would seem to suggest that the Press Bureau is influencing the drama of to-day.

* * *

Several thousand packs of playing-cards have been offered free for the use of the wounded in hospital. After his recent arduous time, Tommy will appreciate a little nap.

* * *

It is suggested that the War Office should buy blankets from seaside boarding-houses now closing. Such a course might lead to misconstruction upon the placards announcing "Terrible Slaughter."

* * *

The headline to an article on 'Varsity athletes at the front which reads "Blues in the British Army," will doubtless be seized on by the Berlin Press as evidence of the demoralisation of our troops.

* * *

An incident which shows how the authorities try to keep our troops in ignorance of movements at the front occurred at Farnborough the other day, when the Prime Minister presented a private, with whom he had been chatting, with a Sunday newspaper and a war picture-book.

* * *

Agony advertisement from the *Times*:—

Gentleman, resident at Brighton or other South Coast watering-place, wanted, two or three mornings or evenings a week to read *The Times;* companionable; 3s. 6d each time offered.—Box L 15, *The Times.*

The bribe seems somewhat low.

THE LADY WITH DIFFIDENT FEET.

A reformer is a man who goes about looking for the unpleasant side of human nature with a microscope.

A spendthrift in the Garden of Eden would have found no difficulty in turning over a new leaf.

MORE OR LESS.

The Compleat Companion.

They tell me Scotland looks very lovely this year, with all the big houses shut up, and no one to shoot the birds and things. Personally, I have never had any sympathy with the killing part, although I must confess I like eating the result. But tramping over the heather takes a lot to beat, with the little purple bells crunching stiffly under your feet, and everywhere the gorse stretching out big yellow hands to clasp yours. I don't know whether any of you feel the same, but beautiful scenery always makes me want to hold somebody's hand. I always think a companion for a country walk should be selected with great care. Such a lot depends upon him for the true success of the afternoon. But he must be just a friend, mark you, not a lover. Lovers are so volcanic. They always erupt at the wrong moment. A country walk needs a Fielding for a companion, not a Byron.

* * *

Love's Graves.

If you are in the neighbourhood of Charing Cross these days you may often meet a woman coming from the big gates of the station with a strange, wild look in her eyes. Generally there are children with her, bundles as well, and kindly strangers. But the woman looks past all these—who knows at what?—a burning town or a ruined home, maybe. But I think myself every woman who looks like that is staring straight into the grave of love. Love spoils so many women's lives that I wonder they don't end by hating it. They seem instead fond of tearing open the wounds it leaves behind, for fear that they should heal. A woman would make a good torturer. It was a good thing for their victims that those in authority in the Middle Ages didn't realise this. She knows so well, you see, how to torture herself.

* * *

Armchair Patriotism.

The patriotic man in the stalls annoys me greatly. He will cheer to the echo any allusion to the Allies, join in the various national anthems, encore the entertainer who tactfully alludes to our latest victory, and think thereby he has done his duty. It will serve him right if a Zeppelin bomb drops some day right on his head. Armchair patriots are just cowards, sheltering themselves behind a bulwark of more or less flimsy excuses, of which the most frequent seems to be the Scriptural one, "I have married a wife." If I had a husband like that, the sooner he was run over by a motor 'bus and I became a widow, the better I'd be pleased. Besides, any woman will tell you that the last thing she desires in a husband is his constant presence. If the fog of war enveloped him for a little while, the mists of illusion would gather again around romance, and hide the torn draperies, and make its faded roses smell sweet again.

* * *

A Lost Opportunity.

One of the saddest features to me about the fall of Antwerp was the doing to death of the lions in the big Zoo there. I am by no means a crank, and I hold no brief for that famous little "brown dog" of the anti-vivisectionists. In life the lesser must always suffer for the benefit of the greater. But I can't help feeling sorry somehow for those great tawny-eyed creatures that used to sit so wistfully behind their iron bars and gaze with jungle-bound indifferent eyes at curious visitors. I think those monarchs of the forest might have had a sporting chance. Why not have added them as supers to the Belgian army, for example, and sent them forth into the open to reconnoitre for stray Uhlans. One tawny beast would surely have been a good match for a dozen blonde ones.

* * *

Green Chestnuts.

I am informed by a circular that the roller-skating season has begun. So far as I am concerned, I don't care whether it has ended. To go round and round a dusty room on wheels has always struck me as being a particularly senseless method of amusement. To skate in the open on a sheet of ice, with a belt of dark fir trees holding its whiteness about as in a frame, and everywhere pale snow hiding the darkness and ugliness of everything; to skate in the open with a big white moon seeming to chase one as one flies up and down a fairy world, with the lights of dancing fires in the bank beyond and coming out of the darkness everywhere the sound of gay laughter and the whirr of skates—that's skating if you like. The other is just an apology for the real thing, an amusement for those who are content with make-believe. But I am one of those who prefer the real thing or nothing. I prefer my chestnuts to be green.

LOUISE HEILGERS.

If you only bother about what concerns you, you will never know anything worth knowing.

* * *

It isn't against the rules of war for soldiers to steel a march.

TAKING HIM DOWN.

Lady: "It was seeing your work that made my brother go in for art."
Conceited Artist: "Ah! He found it inspiring, eh?"
Lady: "Yes, I suppose so. Anyway, he said if you could make a living at it, anybody could."

THE FICKLENESS OF MONTY.

Montague Quickshott was a clerk in a City office with a salary of 35/- per week. His home was at Lavender Crescent, Tooting, and, taking these two main facts of his life together with the supplementary one that he was a tenor in the choir of the local citadel of Nonconformity, it is not surprising that he fell in love. It was a natural sequence.

The lady of his choice was Miss Bella Saunders, the eldest daughter of William Saunders, a fat, self-satisfied, self-made (one would have thought, by his appearance, ready-made) man, who had risen from the position of errand-boy in a grocer's establishment to that of manager of Messrs. Hobson Bros., the grocers, of Tooting.

Now, Bella was a girl of parts—that is to say, on completing her studies at a select academy for young ladies, she was sent to Brussels to finish—the well-known process whereby girls in the flapper stage are instructed in the arts of spoiling an appalling number of good painting-blocks, and of amusing (that is the correct expression) her friends by her rendering of classical ballads in indifferently pronounced French, German and Italian.

But romance came into Montague's life before the finishing process began. It was while Bella was a pupil at the select academy aforementioned that he found himself next to her one Wednesday evening at choir practice. A lack of copies of the anthem made it necessary for him to look over with her, and oh, how it thrilled him as he touched her soft, white hand!

It was a short step towards asking Bella if he might see her home after choir practice next Wednesday, and he took it. In a short time Montague and Bella had plighted their troth, and sworn solemnly that through fair weather and foul, in poverty and in wealth, in sickness and in health, and in all the rest of the contingencies, likely and unlikely, that lovers imagine, they would be true to each other.

All this was repeated at the office next day to an admiring office-boy, who also had been a target for one of Cupid's darts, but whose salary of 15/- per week cast a gloom over all his life, and made him regard matrimony as a pinnacle as unattainable as the summit of Mount Everest.

And then the blow fell! Bella was sent to Brussels. Her father said that he was determined to "give 'er a better chawnce than 'e'd hever 'ad, and she was to be a good gell and come back ready to henter the best society of Tooting, and then she might rope in young 'Obson, who 'ad pots o' money."

Bella broke the sad news to the love-sick Monty, and there was such a sobbing and a sighing as was only equalled by that which took place on the news of the demise of the unfortunate Cock Robin. She would never look at the hateful Hobson! Had he not a big nose and a nubbly chin? How could he compare with her darling Monty!

After she went there followed a period of passionate correspondence. The dismal office-boy's admiration knew no bounds when Montague furtively showed him letters airily addressed to Fraulein Saunders, or Mlle. Saunders, or Signorina Saunders, at the Institut de Brillon, 15, Rue Flamande, Bruxelles, and the whistle he emitted on hearing that Monty spent 7d. per week in stamps drew the attention of the clerk in charge, who promptly boxed his ears.

But presently the leaven of distance began to work. Monty found himself feeling rather tired of writing three long letters a week, and before long he only sent two. After a time they dwindled again to one long one and a short one, which ended: "Excuse more, dear, as I am tired after a hard day's work." This was a change from "I am never tired, of working, darling, as I know it is for you, dearest love. I made 7/6 overtime this week, pet. That would buy a fender, wouldn't it, sweet?"

There was, of course, a reason for Montague's defection, and equally, of course, the reason was feminine. After the manner of his kind he had begun to worship from afar a dazzling vision in a filmy muslin dress, whom he saw regularly on the train each morning.

One very wet evening she alighted from the train just as he did, and to his intense joy he saw that she had no umbrella. Always the gentleman, he advanced and asked in mincing tones, "May I offer you the protection of my humberhella?" She gratefully replied that "it was very good of him, but what would he do?" "There is room for us both, I hope," he replied, and (as he told the dismal office-boy) his masterful will won the day.

His new flame was only kept alight by the fuel of casual hat raisings in the street, for the muslin vision, though grateful enough for the shelter Monty had offered on the one great occasion, had a very unapproachable way with her, and in spite of all the efforts of his masterful will he never seemed to get much nearer. But that was no reason why Monty should abandon his new hopes. As he mis-quoted to the dismal office-boy, "She is a female, therefore may be won." And if so, why should not he be the winner?

Now, it chanced that Bobby Saunders, Bella's young brother (who, with the fiendish ingenuity of young brothers, had discovered all about his sister's Monty), saw him escorting the muslin vision through the rain, and promptly wrote and told Bella all about it. This letter reached her together with one from her father, in which he painted, in glowing colours, the charms of young Hobson, wholly misleading as to the nose and chin, which were, as Bella had said, big and nubbly respectively. The consequence was that Bella replied, saying that she was feeling run down and must come home for a holiday.

The fickle Monty heard the news from Bobby, who doubled his pocket-money by means of bribes from both Monty and the nubbly-chinned Hobson, and once again his affections began to waver. It was the swing of the pendulum.

Bella was at home again within the week, and Monty was hovering round the gate of the "Pagoda" as he had done before she had gone abroad.

One evening he saw the door open and Bella appeared, more radiant, more glorious than ever. How could he have been so blind as to cease loving her? He heard a man's voice in the hall, and then he saw it was young Hobson, who called out: "Wait a moment, darling. I've forgotten my gloves."

"Darling!" How dare he? What right had this upstart to address his Bella thus? Oh, if only the duelling days were not past! What could he do? His giddy brain prompted him to wait round the corner, and then when he heard their approaching footsteps, to go up to them with jaunty air, as if to tweak the nose of his rival. What he would do next he left to the inspiration of the moment.

Here they were. Monty adopted his swaggering attitude and advanced. Bella gave him a withering glance and passed by unrecognising, with her nose in the air, drawing her skirts about her as if he were a centipede.

Turning round, he threw out his arms with an appealing gesture. "Bella," he cried, "forgive me, forgive me! What about his nubbly chin? How about his nose?"

Hobson raised his stick as if to strike, and Monty slunk away like the puppy that he was. And Bella walked on, unheeding.

Next day he sought the sympathy of the dismal office-boy, who never thought that such romance could be in real life.

"But why not stick to the other one?" he suggested.

"It's her wedding-day to-day," replied Monty, and burst into tears.

John Carlton.

BY THE WAY.

Such-and-such a thing happened "before the war" or "after the war"—that is the manner in which we are already, half-unconsciously or sub-consciously, beginning to date the march of events. And how long *is* it destined to last, my fellow-countrymen? But soft, methinks the shadow of the Censor already falls across the page—for hath he not, among his numerous prohibitions, deprecated the forecasting of happenings or of anything appertaining to the duration of the world-conflict?

* * *

Why has nobody suggested a pilgrimage to Merton as a not inappropriate way of honouring Nelson's memory on the 21st? Here, at all events, is a delightful spot within an easy 'bus ride, looking its best in what Owen Meredith calls "the crimson autumn weather." Moreover, Merton was, rightly or wrongly, the place where our hero's happiest hours were passed, and whence he departed in hot haste to give his life for his country.

* * *

Killing off the snakes at Antwerp's famous "Zoo," and placing steel plates over the wild beasts' cages (as if that could do any good!) before the bombardment, recalls the precautions taken at our own "Zoo," when a barge laden with guncotton blew up on the Regent's Canal in 1874. So many neighbouring houses were wrecked that the Gardens were surrounded by troops from St. John's Wood Barracks for fear the lions and tigers "got out." Their stronger cages had escaped injury, however, while the many birds that flew out of their damaged cages returned at feeding-time. One of the houses to suffer most was that of Alma-Tadema, whose two daughters were aroused from sleep by the window-sash and hundreds of hazel nuts (part of the cargo of the wrecked barge) being flung on to the bed. The elder girl is said to have remarked to her sister, "Anna, ring the bell!"

* * *

There is weeping and wailing in the classic purlieus of Whitehall, where the members of the Royal United Service Institution are much "put about" by the intrusion of the Press Bureau. At first sight the R.U.S.I. is not an exciting resort, and reminds you of nothing so much as Robert Louis Stevenson's gorgeous description of Prince Florizel's end-of-the-season club. ("There were three journalists and a writer on the Higher Metaphysics playing pool, and . . . . only the raff of ordinary club frequenters showed their commonplace and obliterated countenances.") But it improves on acquaintance. A nominal annual subscription entitles you to the use of the most magnificent library of war-books in the world, and to tea at a nominal figure in a cosy room. The obliging secretary is Col. Sir Arthur Leetham (he was knighted by King George this year), and an inscription reminds you that "through this doorway passed his Majesty King Charles I. on his way to execution, January 31, 1649."

* * *

The stories of German soldiers being found dead in trenches, unwounded and grasping their rifles, as in life, have revived the "Turpinite" rumours. Here, however, the existence of the deadly explosive is not generally accepted. Some of us know that the War Office possesses the secret of an appalling engine of destruction devised by the Earl of Dundonald. This famous soldier wanted to use it in the Crimean War, but it was barred by our War Office on the ground that it was "too inhuman." It is said to be absolutely irresistible, and should the worst come to the worst, that well-guarded secret, hidden away in a Whitehall safe, may stand us in good stead.

* * *

Somebody was talking the other day about "Drake's Drum," but very few people know what that implement really is. It is preserved at Buckland Abbey, in Devonshire. The famous sailor declared before he died that if ever England found herself in danger and the drum was beaten he would sail up the Channel with a ghostly fleet and drive the invader away. Twice has the drum been sounded, and on neither occasion in vain. The 'ast time that we summoned Drake's spirit to earth was when Napoleon threatened these shores. Everybody knows what was the result.

* * *

He had been presiding at a meeting at the Town Hall in aid of the refugees from Belgium. His speech was full of eloquent pleas for the unfortunate inhabitants of that plucky little country. No sacrifice, no self-denial could be too great in order to afford them succour. Next morning his favourite golfing jacket, a comfortable, well-worn garment, could not be found anywhere. At last his wife confessed that she must have packed it with a parcel of clothes which she had despatched to the refugees. Then he made another eloquent speech, but luckily this time no reporters were present.

"Don't you think you ought to go for a soldier, my man?"

"Not me, Guv'nor. I just done six months for going fer one, and nearly got bloomin' well murdered into the bargain."

I heard the other day of a surrender that has not yet found its way into official despatches. The enemy in this case was the whole male sex, who had been kept at bay for two years by a young lady well known in suffragette circles. She repudiated the right of her male relations to control her affairs, and set up an establishment of her own in a West End flat, where she lived a bachelor existence. On her return from her holidays she found an official-looking document stating that she would be required to provide a billet for five soldiers. In utter consternation she rushed off to her father for advice. Her righteous indignation was greeted with roars of laughter by the whole family. When she demanded an explanation her young brother confessed that the letter was a spoof of his own concoction. The latest information is that she is returning to the shelter of the paternal roof after such an exposure of the hollowness of her ideas.

* * *

I hear that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has been commissioned by one of the magazines to write a series of "war" stories at a price which would certainly bring spasms of envy and despair to the hearts of his less fortunate brethren of the pen. The war seems to have had the very opposite from a depressing effect upon the financial status of certain of our leading authors, especially those capable of turning an agile quill into the thrilling channels of patriotic adventure, and none should be better suited for such a task than the genial creator of the immortal "Sherlock." Of course, Sir Arthur has travelled a good deal, and is more or less conversant with the topographical features of the various theatres of war, and, in addition to this, his son, Arthur Alleyn Kingsley, who left for the front some weeks ago with the Royal Army Medical Corps and who inherits something of his father's literary ability, should prove very useful in supplying "local colouring," etc., from the very thick of action.

* * *

The *Daily Sketch* has been pleased to inform us that Miss Campion—who is making her first appearance in a naughty little Parisian play at the Ambassadors'—although a Cockney bred and born "is so 'Frenchy' in appearance and can, if she likes, talk French with so perfect an accent that you might at any time mistake her for a half-sister to Gaby Deslys." I have been wondering which of the two ladies will feel the more flattered by the comparison. Knowing something of the very independent natures of both—and also having in mind a certain incident which once took place at Longchamps, in which both played a part—I should feel inclined to say very definitely—neither!

* * *

It is doubtful whether fullest justice has even now been done to the brutal frankness—there is no other word for it—of the official accounts of British reverses. No sooner is a cruiser lost or a battalion cut up, than the War Office or Admiralty notifies it to the public with a promptness and a wealth of detail that seem lamentably lacking in the more meagre accounts of our victories. There could, indeed, be no more striking or effective contrast to the German "lie factory" than the almost painful regard for truth exhibited by those in authority over us.

THE LOITERER.

Love, like the Book of Life, often begins in a garden and ends in revelations.

* * *

Many a man has aimed at a star—only to have to content himself with a member of the chorus.

* * *

It's no good being regular in one's habits if one's habits are bad.

"Good fishin'? Yessir; ye go down that private road till ye come to th' sign 'Trespassers will be prosecuted,' cross the field with th' bull in it, an' you'll see a sign 'No fishin' allowed'—that's it."

SPORTING NOTES.

THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

At the time of writing no serious speculation has taken place in connection with the last big handicap at Newmarket, but in a very few days it will no doubt open out a lot.

Maiden Erlegh, although top-weight, will want a lot of shaking off, and I much prefer his chance of C. Peck's candidates, although I am informed that Irish Chief is a really good three-year-old; but we have not yet seen him run on this side of the Channel, his last appearance being in His Majesty's Plate, at the Curragh, in April, a race he cantered away with. The best of Mr. J. B. Joel's will undoubtedly be a public fancy, and run very prominently into the bargain. At the present moment I should take Sun Yat as representing his best chance. Roseworthy seems to have depreciated, otherwise he is not at all badly handicapped, and if all was right with him on the day would be extremely dangerous. I have no fancy for either Sir Martin or Wrack, and Nassau will be hardly good enough with his penalty for winning the Duke of York Stakes. Santair ran third last year, and such good accounts reach me of his well-being that he must go very near to winning again this time. Jarnac II. is confidently expected by his connections, and has been backed accordingly, and I certainly mean to keep him on the right side. Bonbon Rose has been going well in his gallops of late, and is thought sure to take a handicap before the season closes. Cheerful, who ran such a desperate finish with Cantilever last year, has again got a very light weight to carry, but is such a difficult animal to size up that, personally, I mean to leave him alone at any rate for the time being. Waiontha ran brilliantly as a two-year-old, but has done nothing since, still I am told she is likely to make a great show. I will reserve my choice until next week.

At Sandown Park, on Thursday, Curly Coat looks worth supporting for the Orleans Nursery Handicap; Happy Fanny ought to win the Temple Handicap; and Flippant the Wheatsheaf Handicap on Friday.

BLACKSTONE.

Your Future Depends on YOURSELF

IF the noble efforts and splendid courage of our Army and Navy are to be of the greatest use to our Country, it is essential that those of us who are unable to take our places in the fighting line should keep the wheels of industry and commerce revolving.

YOU must do YOUR part. The first point is: see to it that your job is secure. That each man should, as far as possible, keep his job is of great importance to our country.

On yourself alone it depends whether you keep your position and your future secure during this hour of trial.

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IN TIME OF WAR PREPARE FOR PEACE

IN STAGELAND.

What makes most for success or failure in the more cultivated forms of theatrical entertainment? Speaking for one fashionable playhouse, I have been interested to note that the Society play "on a basis of melodrama" is one of the most doubtful starters, so to speak. Thus, at the St. James's, one has seen several pieces of this description fail to attract, *e.g.*, "Lord Anerley," "The Awakening," a comedy-drama by Temple Thurston, whose name escapes me, and, quite lately, "Those Who Sit in Judgment."

Alas! poor "feminist" school of "art." Miss Janette Steer's little effort at the Court, "The Sphinx," of which she is both author and a leading interpreter, is sphinx-like only inasmuch as several of the characters resemble nothing in this world. It is frankly unpleasant without being clever, and the "limited" number of performances for which it was announced would of necessity be very limited. It was a pity to see the good acting of Barbara Everest, Stella Campbell, Gillian Scaife, and Langhorne Burton wasted on such poor material.

At the Palladium, Lyn Harding is "presenting" a particularly powerful and timely little sketch, "For France" (I believe it appeared as a story in "Chambers's" years ago), in which this fine actor's well-known methods find suitable expression, and which is greeted with enthusiastic applause. A lighter item in the same programme is "Swankers by the Sea," wherein Courtice Pounds, his sister Louie, and Sterndale Bennett figure as a party of "buskers." This item had previously enjoyed a prosperous run around the suburban halls, and dear old "Charlie" Pounds' voice is as sweet as ever.

I hied me to the Royalty to see the newcomer, Miss Isobel Elsom, in the exacting rôle (or rather, rôles) in which she has succeeded Miss Gladys Cooper in "My Lady's Dress." I was agreeably surprised—I say "agreeably" because one had heard the usual claptrap about this young actress not being wholly suited to follow Miss Cooper, etc. If she does not as yet possess quite the finer lights and shades of the latter's clever series of impersonations, Miss Elsom may rest assured that she has made a "palpable hit," and, moreover, she is greatly gifted by nature. Dennis Eadie is, if possible, better than ever in nearly all of his half-dozen brilliant character studies.

Finally to the Comedy, where the American-made "Peg o' My Heart" serves to exploit the considerable acting qualities of Miss Laurette Taylor. Indeed, it is difficult, after seeing her, to imagine anyone else as this wayward, fascinating, all-enduring, lovable little red-haired heroine of Hartley Manners' fragrant comedy. Miss Taylor as Margaret ("Peg") is supported by three of our very best actors in sharply-contrasted styles—Eille Norwood (last seen in that finished performance as the gentleman cracksman of "Within the Law"), J. H. Barnes, and A. E. Matthews. The last-named, in particular, plays up to the heroine in his most youthful and artless fashion, with all the ease we have come to expect from him. Nor must I omit the "real dog," nor Peg's father, who is never seen, though we seem to know him because she so frequently apostrophises him. "Peg o' My Heart" may be of slight texture, but it looks very much like being a big success for Arthur Chudleigh's theatre, even in these strenuous times.

Don't fail to see Phyllis Monkman in the weird "Opium Den" scene of the Alhambra's revue. She is especially good. The reduced prices at this house, by the way, have led to no reduction in the quality of the show, which remains one of the best and brightest in London. I have a great and increasing admiration for Lee White (who sings—or recites—"Your King and Country Want You" most touchingly), and her duo with clever Jack Morrison (scene ix.) is absolutely delicious. It never stales—and I have seen it about a dozen times. Then there is "Bobby" Hale, a host in himself, and the beautiful Kosloff ballet, "Flowers of Allah," not in the revue.

The Understudy.

OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

THAT EARLY CLOSING.

She: "I wonder you are not ashamed to come home your wife half drunk!"
He: "I am, m'dear; but all the pubs close at eleven now, you know."

* * *

HER FIRST ATTEMPT.

Said the bride: "Here's my first batch of biscuit.
Just wait! From the oven I'll whiscuit."
Then the poor woman cried,
When her hubby replied:
"Let it burn! I don't think I should riscuit."

* * *

Yankee (after a particularly brilliant yarn): "Yes, gentlemen, if there is one thing I *do* admire, it is the truth. I can assure you that not a single lie has passed my lips since I left my sainted mother's apron-strings."
The Victim: "Oh! By the way, you talk through your nose, don't you?"

* * *

JUST A HINT.

Daughter: This piano being my very own, may I take it with me when I get married, papa dear?
Papa: Yes, but don't tell anyone; it might spoil your chances.

—*Puck.*

* * *

IMPROVED.

"He is a self-made man, is he not?"
"Yes, except for the alterations made by his wife and mother."

—*Judge.*

WAITING FOR THE DOCTOR.

Reverend Gent: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself idling there all the day long."
Thirsty Bob (with feeling): "Well, yer see, I'm a sort of outdoor patient of this 'ere establishment, an' I'm awaitin' treatment."

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